Election Role-Playing Debate

Objective:
Students will research a candidate’s positions in order to role-play debate.

Students will:
- enhance research skills
- sharpen debate skills

Resources/Materials:
- 2020election.procon.org
- internet connection

Preparation:
- Teachers should decide whether they want to limit topics to allow depth of research into one topic, or not place any limits to allow a broader understanding of a candidate’s platform.
- Teachers should choose their preferred debate format. Options may be found in ProCon.org’s lesson plans.

Activity:
1. In small groups, students should research one candidate per group
2. Students should choose a group representative to debate as that candidate using the candidates’ stated positions on ProCon.org as a starting point.
3. Student representatives should debate in class, acting as the group’s candidate. Students may switch in and out of the role, or otherwise support the “candidate.”
4. Variations:
   a. Rather than choosing a group representative, students in the group could each debate using a round robin format.
   b. Rather than a debate, students could prepare a campaign speech individually. This could be an oral or written exercise.
c. Students should watch clips of the candidates during debates and speeches. Then analyze word choice, speech inflections, body language, and other information given by an oral presentation rather than a written text.

Evaluation:

1. Quality of research
2. Debate preparation